

Application Serial No. 09/877,768
Amendment dated September 29, 2004
Reply to final office action of June 29, 2004

Docket No. 1232-4722

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims (25, 28, 30-37, 51-58), (27, 29, 67, 78, 79), (38, 41, 43-46, 64, 80, 81), (39, 47-50, 82-84), (40, 42, 85-87) and (88, 89, 90) are pending in this application. Claims are grouped with parentheses to show the dependencies in each group. For example, claims 28, 30-37 and 51-58 depend from claim 25, either directly or indirectly. Claims 25, 27, 38, 39, 40 and 88 are independent. All of the pending claims are allowed except for the group of claims 38, 41, 43-46, 64, 80 and 81.

By this Amendment, claim 38 is amended to incorporate the elements of claims 43 and 46. Claims 43 and 46 are cancelled. No new matter has been added by this Amendment.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims (25, 28, 30-37, 51-58), (27, 29, 67, 78, 79), (39, 47-50, 82-84), (40, 42, 85-87) and (88, 89, 90) are allowed.

Claim 46, in depending from claims 43 and 38, has been indicated as allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 38, 41, 43, 44, 64, 80 and 81 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,183,094 to Ohta ("Ohta").

Claims 38, 43, 45, 80 and 81 have been further rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being

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anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,552,760 to Gotoh et al. ("Gotoh").

As indicated above, claim 38 has been amended to incorporate the elements of allowed claim 46. claims 43 and 46 are cancelled. Accordingly, claim 38 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicants however reserve the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicants believe that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

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AUTHORIZATION

No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicants hereby petition the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4722). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: September 29, 2004

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